

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Substitute the following amended Claim 1 for the pending claim of the same number:

1. (Currently Amended) A pinion carrier comprising:

a first annular body having an outer surface and an inner surface and a plurality of legs projecting from the circumference of the inner surface and terminating in a flat surface;

a second annular body having an outer surface and an inner surface and a plurality of legs projecting from the circumference of the inner surface and terminating ~~on~~ in a flat surface; and

the flat surfaces of the legs of said first annular body being joined to the flat surface of the respective legs of the second annular body.

2. (Original) Method of producing a pinion carrier for planetary gear assembly comprising the steps of:

1) cold forming a first cup-shaped body having an outer surface and an inner surface and a circumferential side wall with a longitudinal central axis and including a plurality of spaced apart legs terminating in flat surfaces;

2) cold forming a second cup-shaped body having an outer surface and an inner surface and a circumferential side wall with a longitudinal central axis and including a plurality of spaced apart legs terminating in flat surfaces;

3) causing the first and second bodies to be positioned such that the flat surfaces of the legs of the respective bodies are in juxtaposed contacting relation; and

4) welding the contacting surfaces of the legs of the bodies together.

3. (Original) The method defined in Claim 2 wherein at least one of the cup-shaped bodies is provided with a centrally formed aperture.

4. (Original) The method defined in claim 3 including the step of joining a torque transfer structure to circumscribe the aperture in one of the cup-shaped bodies or creating a gear/spline as an integral part of at least one of the cup-shaped bodies.

5. (Original) The method defined in claim 4 including the step of forming planetary gear shaft apertures to extend from the outer surface to the inner surface of cup-shaped bodies.

6. (New) A pinion carrier for a planetary gear assembly comprising:
a first cold formed cup-shaped body having an outer surface, an inner surface, and a circumferential side wall with a longitudinal central axis and including a plurality of spaced-apart legs terminating in flat surfaces; and
a second cold formed cup-shaped body having an outer surface, an inner surface, and a circumferential side wall with a longitudinal central axis and including a plurality of spaced-apart legs terminating in flat surfaces;
wherein the flat surfaces of the legs of said first and second bodies are in juxtaposed contacting relation and suitably welded together.

7. (New) A pinion carrier as defined in Claim 6 wherein at least one of said cup-shaped bodies is provided with a centrally formed aperture.

8. (New) A pinion carrier as defined in Claim 7 including a torque transfer structure circumscribing the aperture in said cup-shaped body.

9. (New) A pinion carrier as defined in Claim 7 wherein said first cup-shaped body and said second cup-shaped body are provided with holes for receiving shafts of associated pinions.

10. (New) A pinion carrier as defined in Claim 9 wherein the holes for the pinion are located intermediate said spaced-apart legs.